THE MILAN EXCHANGE

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MILAN - - TENNESSEE.

THE SHREWD ATTORNEY.

Her name was Sniggs—it didn't suit
Her rich, æsthetic nature,
And so she thought she'd have it changed
By act of Legislature.

She sought a limb—a legal man
With lots of subtle learning,
And unto him she did confide
Her soul's most painful yearning.

He heard her through—he asked her wealth,
He pondered o'er her story,
And then he said he would consult
His volumes statutory.

She sighed and rose—he took her hand
And sudden said: "How stupid!
I did forget the precedent
Of 'Hymen vs. Cupid!'"

"Just substitute my name for yours."
The maiden blushed and faltered—
But in two weeks she took her name
To church and had it altar'd.

—*Cleveland Leader.*

KENYON'S VERSION.

His Five Years' Rough Experience in the West.

Bret Harte's "Cicely?" Yes. Well, "That reminds me of somethin' right in that suit."

We had it rough, Molly and I, for five years. We were New Englanders, both of us; but I had come West years before when I wasn't much more than a boy, to get rid of the lung fevers I used to have every spring sure, and may be the fall between thrown in. I had nothing but my two hands to start with; but as soon as I'd made a beginning—a small one, of course—I went back for Molly.

And then, as I said, for five years we had it rough.

In the first place, we were burned out in the town, and never saved a thing but the clothes we stood in and my team. Then we started again out on the edge of every thing, where land was cheap, and it looked as if hard work might count for something. That time the Indians ran us off. Never saw an Indian? Well sir, you never want to. I don't want to be hard on any thing the Lord saw fit to make. I suppose He knows what they are for—or what He meant them for—I know there's a good deal of talk lately about their wrongs. They've had 'em, sure enough; may be I don't see things all round as I ought to. They say all general rules bear hard on particular cases. I'm one of the particular cases, perhaps. Anyhow, they killed one of the children there—the girl, five years old; shot her right in full sight of the cabin, and Molly hasn't got over it till this day.

I picked up a few head of cattle cheap that fall, and for a year we lived in a wagon, camping and driving our cattle across the ranges. You don't know what that life means for a woman, take it month in and month out. Cooking over a camp fire, and not much of any thing to cook, anyhow; clothes wet half the time; never warm in winter nor cold in summer, and never clean. That year the boy died—snake-bit. We were so far from a settlement that we couldn't get a doctor, and we buried him ourselves.

We got into a cabin in the fall. Four of us, each one poorer than the others, took a section of Government land. We had our teams and our health, and we were down to bed-rock; not much of any thing to lose and every thing to gain. A man will work under such circumstances, you'll find. We built in the middle on the adjoining corners of our quarters, and so had a little settlement of our own. We did it for the sake of the women; for it made an almighty sight of travel for us to get over in the course of the day. They were all New England women, slender and spare, but solid grit clear through. Plymouth Rock is pretty good stock. Never a whimper nor a complaint out of one of them, though there wasn't a second frock in the crowd; and if there was always corn-bread and coffee enough for two in any of the shanties it wasn't in ours. After awhile, though, we had game enough—quail and prairie chickens. Prairie chickens! I wouldn't be hired to touch one now. I remember one day along toward spring when Molly *struck*. We had had quail and prairie chicken, prairie chicken and quail, three times a day ever since I could remember, it seemed to me. She put her fork down and pushed her plate away and just quoted out of the Bible. "Not one day, nor two days nor five days, neither ten days nor twenty days, but even until it come out at your nostrils and be loathsome unto you." Molly knew the Bible.

It really began to look as if we had touched bottom. That next spring we got our crops in—corn laid by, rain and sunshine and hot weather all just right; and now and then we would hear a laugh from the houses.

But the day the grasshoppers came there was mighty little laughing done. Clayton came in where I was taking my noon smoke and kind of dropped down in a chair by the door, as if he couldn't get any farther.

"Mountaineers!" he said, with a kind of gasp.

"What?" I said, not knowing but it was another kind of an Indian.

"Grasshoppers!" It seems he had been there before.

I ran out, and sure enough there they were, coming up against the sun like a low kind of cloud. And in a minute or two it was like being out in a live hail-storm. We tried to fight them with fire and hot water, but we gave it up in an hour. All day we sat and listened to that horrible crackling and crunching, and when they got through it looked as if a fire had gone over us. Not a green thing left, and corn-stalks gnawed down to stumps.

We held a council of war. The end of it was that we drove our stock into the town next day, thirty miles, and sold it. It didn't make us rich, but at least we got the price of the hides. Then three of us went to work in the coal-shippings, and Jim Clayton went back to stay with the women. He had smashed his shoulder that summer and was of no mortal use with shovel and pick. We were to keep them in supplies, and it looked as if, after all, things might have been worse.

And they got worse before a great while. The coal company petered out just as the real cold weather set in. We took back a big load of coal; it was the only pay we ever got for our last fortnight's work, and called another council.

Along in November late—about the time when they were keeping Thanksgiving on the side where they know what Thanksgiving means—we started out on a buffalo hunt. There was enough to eat, such as it was, for a month in the cabins, and fuel enough to keep them warm; and by that time we thought work might begin again. Anyway, we'd have our meat for the rest of the winter.

Well, it's no use to go over that. It wasn't a pleasure trip. We weren't out for the fun of killing. We camped out at night, and rode and shot and dressed game by day, and did not starve nor quite freeze to death; and we got back again on to the plains along in December.

I wanted to push through and get home, but the horses were played out; and all the next day, after we struck the level, we just crawled along. We had not heard a word since we started, and I was pretty anxious—Molly was not well when I left her; but there was no choice about it. I had to go; the women were with her, and there was a doctor in the town, and Clayton had a good horse, and we had to do about that as we had done about every thing else—take our chances.

I shan't forget that day. Along in the middle of the morning a norther began to blow. It did not snow, although the sky thickened up with gray, woolly-looking clouds, low down and threatening. You never felt a norther? A wind that goes through your bones, that clutches your heart and stops your brain, that breaks you up, body and soul. You don't know any thing about cold till you've felt one. If there is such a thing as a frozen hell, that's where these winds come from. It isn't pure cold; it's *ghost* cold, and all the infernal regions let loose, yelling and thundering up in the awful emptiness over your head and round you.

Love the prairies? Well, you can love them a good deal better on paper than anywhere else. But there's an awful fascination about them, somehow. It's like the sea. A man that's got his living on them for ten years is fit for nothing else in God's world. He can't get away. He's spoiled for every thing else under Heaven. He's got to have the sky and a chance to breathe. It's about all there is to get, better than he can have anywhere else; but it's a sure fact that so much he's got to have whatever else gets left. It's like a poem, may be—"I ain't much on rhyme" myself—driving across them in warm weather; horses fresh and well fed, with a big tent and spring cots for camping and a supply wagon with every thing you can think of but ice, and may be that; all the world a-ripple with summer green; the south wind surging like a warm ocean, and the sky blue and soft and arching away up to the great White Throne. That's one thing. To go trailing along, horses dead beat and half starved, pulling a big wagon through sloughs up to the axles or over frozen ruts that wring every bolt in the concern and every bone in your body; with mile after mile of dead grass stretching out to the edge of the world; with buzzards swinging up out of nowhere, more like something infernal than any decent live thing; with coyotes yelping and crying all night—that's another thing, and the kind that doesn't get talked about much. Perhaps you remember that item in last winter's newspapers, a half-dozen lines or so—two families frozen in a Texas norther, horses, dogs, and all just as they stood.

That night we went into camp ten miles from home. There was a ravine and plenty of brush, and the horses were ready to drop in their tracks, and that last ten miles was one of the things that couldn't be done. So we got our fires made and our horses fed and sheltered as well as we could, and put some heart into ourselves with buffalo steak and hot coffee; and the rest of them packed themselves into the wagon. Some one had to stand guard and keep the fires going, and I took the contract.

It wasn't a dark night. There was a goodish bit of a moon behind the clouds, and it made a gray kind of light over every thing. We were at the bottom of a dry canyon that ran east and west, and the wind did not reach us. It screeched and screamed over our heads, and through it all there was a kind of moaning roar, as if we were at the bottom of a tide as deep as the stars are high. I got to thinking about old times away back, of one Sunday night just before we were married. I had gone East a little sooner than we expected and had to wait for her things to be finished. We went to church that night. A keen, crisp, still night it was, when the sleigh-runners squeaked on the snow and the moonlight traced the shadows of the elms on the white ground as if they had been put in in black drawing. The church was warm and bright and they hadn't taken down the Christmas greens yet, so the air was full of the smell of them—that spicy, haunting smell, that seems as if it came somehow from a world before this. It was years since I had smelled it, and I sat and listened to the music and looked at the people, with their comfortable clothing and faces that were cheerful, not worn and wrinkled with care and weather. Molly was an awfully pretty girl in those days; all pink and white like an apple blossom, somehow. And fighting to keep awake out there in the heart of a Kansas prairie I got to thinking about her as she was then and how she had changed. Skin the color of tanned leather now, and that wild, hungry look in her blue eyes as if they were always staring into the dark for something that frightened her. And both her children dead, and not even a spray of the pine she loved so, nor a breath of music; nothing but a dirt floor and log walls that did all that was expected of them if they kept the weather out.

Somebody hailed over the top of the bluff.

"What camp's that?"

"Kenyon and mates."

"I 'lowed it was"—scrambling down the sides of the gulch on his sure-footed mule—"You Kenyon? News for you. A kid up to your ranch, ten days old. All hands doing well yesterday morning."

The rest roused themselves, sleepily. He had got off the trail, and seeing our smoke had struck for it. We knew and he knew that the chances were that it saved his life; but he swallowed his coffee and smoked his pipe and turned in with the rest as if getting lost in a norther was one of the things that happened, of course, to every man.

Then I sat and thought a while, and finally I roused out Madison.

"You take my turn," I said to him; "I'm going home."

"Not a brute that will travel."

"You'll pass in your checks before morning."

"No, the wind is at my back; no fords; I'll keep going;" and I went.

Went; half running, with the wind driving me on till I was ready to drop. Once I fell and lay there with the wind dragging and tearing at me until I began to grow sleepy, and then I had got to get up and go ahead again.

Perhaps you never tried crossing a prairie at night without a trail to follow. It's a curious thing, one I can't account for; one that makes you feel as if your body and all your senses were of no more account than a spent cartridge. It happened to me that night, space and time seemed to get all mixed up together all at once racing along; it seemed to me that I had been keeping up that sort of thing for hours. I felt so adrift somehow—so horribly lost—as if I had slipped out of myself and was out in space without a landmark to measure any thing by. I expect you'll have to try it yourself to know what I mean. I had no watch; there was no way of knowing how much time had gone. O all the devils that can enter into a man uncertainty is the worst. Every sort of a fancy came into my head. Perhaps I did not know the route as well as I had thought. Perhaps I had even passed the cabins and was going away from them with every step. I ought to have reached them in three hours at the utmost. It seemed to me that I had been hurling along for twice three hours. Once I tried madly to fight back into the wind. It was hopeless—worse than useless. I should drop with exhaustion in a few minutes, and I *must* keep going.

And then I found burned grass under my feet. There had been a fire over the prairie. The ground was not cold yet. A new dread got hold of me. Who knew where it had gone or what had stood in its track? I ran along screaming something—praying or swearing—quite mad, I think, for a little, till I fell again and the jar brought me to my senses.

I had gone over the edge of an old buffalo run scooped dry by the rush of summer rains. I lay still for a little while. I must have gone to sleep or perhaps I fainted away. Anyway, when I came to myself again the world was as still as the grave.

The wind had gone down, as it will sometimes, suddenly and entirely. The silence was horrible. I got on my feet, stiff and benumbed. In all that gray, still, ghastly space there was nothing to tell east from west, or north from south. I was lost on the big range.

It was still enough but the cold was dangerous. I could not stop. I must move somewhere. I must make myself a purpose—a purpose to keep myself alive at least—till daylight came.

I began walking; it did not matter in what direction. If only my strength held out till morning—strength to keep off that horrible drowsiness. I know I stumbled heavily along. I was thinking about Molly and her baby; it all seemed like a dull dream.

And then bells began to ring, deep and soft and far off. I stopped in my tracks to listen. It was the sound of bells, certain, full and sweet; and I turned and went blindly on, following the sound as hound might follow a scent.

All at once I saw a light. It wasn't a star; there were no stars. And nobody lived on the big range, unless some camper was traveling about, and campers don't travel in the teeth of a norther. And this light swung and wavered, went out entirely for a second or two, and then burned up again. And near or far I could not tell, only it was a light and it moved, and I followed it. And I could hear the bells all the time.

Then, all at once, another one of Molly's Bible verses flashed into my head; some thing about a "star in the East that went before them till it came and stood over the place where the young child lay."

Well, I wasn't a wise man, or I shouldn't have got in such a fix. I don't think I'm an irreverent kind of a fellow, either; a man couldn't live with Molly many years and be that. Only I was looking for a young child, too, and babies—little ones—always did seem to me near enough to Heaven to make that story about the star reasonable enough. Any way, there it was, meant for me or not, and I followed it.

More than once I fell, but I always got up and went on. I was talking to myself part of the time, hearing my own voice and thinking it was some one else's. I lost my sense of time again, but I kept on doggedly; and then, suddenly, the light flashed brighter, whirled about in a wild sort of way, and went out entirely.

I gave a shout and ran forward. I thought I should die if I lost it. And there I was standing on a wide trail, with a sort of square, dark shape standing up in front in the dimness before me, with light and voices coming out of the chinks, and somehow, there was the door, and my hand on the latch, and in another second—oh! it was Molly—Molly with a lamp in her hand, bending over a feeding-box made into a cradle, with a great armful of hay and a white sheepskin for a cover, and Madison's wife kneeling on one side, and Clayton's wife on the other, and beyond, with the light flashing in their great, wondering, shining eyes, a pair of astonished horses. And then there came a piping cry from the feeding-trough, and I knew I had found the baby.

Burned out? Yes, sir. That was the last thing; but they had had warning before the fire came down on them. Jim Clayton had taken the women and struck across for the big road and they took the first shelter they came to, a stable that had been built in the days when all the California supplies went overland by mule train. When the wind fell he took the lantern and tried to find a cabin that used to stand somewhere near, and I had been following him for half an hour.

Oh, yes, I'm well fixed now; three thousand head of cattle out on the Gunnison. And Molly spends her summers back home, and she and the babies bring back enough croup and catarrh and bronchitis sore throat to last them half the next winter.—*Christine G. Brooks, in N. Y. Independent.*

—Edward Heisler, a farmer of Thomaston, Mass., has two daughters, fourteen and seventeen years old. They both have twelve fingers and twelve toes. The elder weighs 247 pounds, the other 219 pounds; the elder is 78 inches bust and 51 waist measurement; the other is 69 and 46.

—A young German showed would-be suicides a neat, cheap way in Central Park the other day. He fastened his foot in the crotch of a limb and hung head downward until death came. It didn't even cost him the trouble of stealing an old clothes-line.—*Detroit Free Press.*

PROFIT IN BEE-KEEPING.

Preparations That Should Be Made by Beginners in the Business.

That more persons fail to derive either pleasure or profit from keeping bees than from any other department of husbandry is by no means strange. The occupation has been rendered attractive by those who have spoken and written upon it. All the ancient poets from David to Virgil, and all the modern poets from Wordsworth to Whittier, have sung the praises of the industrious little insect that gathers honey from the flowers. Even the composers of the most popular hymns have employed the "busy bee" to point a moral. The profits of bee keeping have been shown by exhibiting the yearly balance-sheet of a few very successful apiarians, who were chiefly engaged in selling patent hives and imported queens. A census was not taken of the failures in bee-keeping, so that the general public learned little about them. Keeping bees was generally represented as a very easy sort of employment, in which there was little to do except to "boss the job." The bees were presumed to know their own business and to attend to it at all reasonable times.

There is no longer much profit in keeping bees if the object be to obtain money from the sale of honey. Sweets of all kinds are very cheap, and honey forms no exception to the general rule. Still a large proportion of farmers who occupy improved places will find it to their advantage to keep a few colonies of bees. The honey they will collect and store will help reduce the grocer's bill, while it will be much more satisfactory for use on the table than the sirups that are now sold. One should not engage in bee-keeping, however, without suitable preparation. Some standard work on bee-keeping should be obtained and carefully studied before any hives or bees are obtained. If practical, the prospective bee-keeper should visit a place where several colonies are kept by some person who has been successful with them. Much information can be thus obtained about the proper location of hives: the methods of handling bees; of keeping them over the winter, and of feeding them when there is a scarcity of natural food. Much can also be learned about the value of different locations for keeping bees and providing plants whose flowers afford honey during different months of the year.

If there are basswood and willow trees on or near the farm when one intends to keep bees they will be found of great value. If there are none it will be the part of wisdom to plant them without delay. They will serve other useful purposes than producing honey for bees to gather. The sides of the road near the farm and bare tracts of land on any portion of it can be sown to melliott or sweet clover to excellent advantage. Alsike or Swedish clover is an excellent honey producing plant, and one that is worthy of attention for producing hay. White clover remains in blossom longer than almost any useful plant, while it yields a most delicious honey of the most desirable color. The beginners must learn that bees do not make honey, and that they can only obtain it when honey-producing flowers abound. Pasturage is as necessary for bees as for farm animals, and on its excellence and nearness to the hives will largely depend success in keeping bees.—*Chicago Times.*

Profits in Poultry.

There is no doubt but that the United States can produce poultry cheaper than any other country. They really require less attention when kept on the farm, than any other stock kept. Where a specialty is made of poultry no more expense need be incurred than where any is specially bred. To the fact that poultry is generally neglected on the farm and the birds expected to take care of themselves, is due the loss of profit therein and the high price in comparison with other flesh. It is measurably, as between the price of any wild product and the same cultivated. When poultry come to be generally raised with the same skill and care as other farm stock, not only will the price be cheapened but at the same time larger profits will accrue to those who understand this, and to-day they are reaping more profit for their labor and capital expended than those engaged in producing almost any other kind of flesh food.—*Farm, Field and Stockman.*

—Paper doors are coming into use, and, as compared with those of wood, possess the advantage of neither shrinking, swelling, cracking nor warping. It is formed of two thick paper boards, stamped and molded into panels, and glazed together with glue and potash, and rolled through heavy rollers. After being covered with a water-proof coating and then with one that is fire-proof, it is painted, varnished and hung in the usual way.

—The export of silver from the United States since 1343 has amounted to $451,746,771.